

Message Text

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ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9819

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 3827

NODIS

DEPT PASS SECRETARY IN KINSHASA

DEPT FOR ATHERTON AND DEAN BROWN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, LE

SUBJ: LEBANESE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS

REF : BEIRUT 3822

1. JUMBLATT SOURCE INFORMS ME THAT DISCUSSIONS THIS AFTERNOON BETWEEN SARKIS AND JUMBLATT WENT VERY WELL. DIFFERENCES ARE REALLY IN FIELD OF PERSONALITIES RATHER THAN PRINCIPLES.

2. SOURCE MAINTAINS THAT BRIEF DELAY BEYOND MAY 1 DATE NEEDED FOR ARRANGING SOME FACE-SAVING PROCEDURE. DOES NOT BELIEVE MAY 1 DATE CAN BE KEPT. JUMBLATT IN POSITION TO CREATE SECURITY SITUATION UNFAVORABLE TO ELECTIONS ON PROJECTED DATE AND INTENDS TO DO SO. (I AM UNFORTUNATELY OBLIGED TO AGREE WITH THIS JUDGMENT.)

3. IN SOURCE'S VIEW, KEY LIES WITH SYRIA. IF SYRIA COULD INVITE JUMBLATT AND HANDLE HIM PROPERLY, IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO OBTAIN JUMBLATT'S CONCURRENCE FOR SARKIS.

4. IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT SARKIS IS PASSING THIS MESSAGE ON TO SYRIA. HOWEVER, SOURCE PLEADED FOR ANY ASSISTANCE WE MIGHT BE IN A POSITION TO RENDER WITH RESPECT TO ENCOURAGING SYRIANS ALONG SUGGESTED LINES. STREAM OF COMMENTS AGAINST JUMBLATT
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BY LOCAL BAATS REPRESENTATIVE KANSO HAVE INFURIATED JUMBLATT AND

AND ANTI-JUMBLATT REMARKS IN KUWAIT BY KHADDAM HAVE MADE MATTERS EVEN WORSE.

5. I QUESTIONED SOURCE ABOUT WHAT KIND OF DELAY JUMBLATT HAD IN MIND. HE REPLIED THAT IT WAS LESS THAN A WEEK. I RECALLED JUMBLATT'S REMARKS ABOUT THE POSSIBLE ILLEGALITY OF PARLIAMENTARY ACTS AFTER MAY 2. HE SAID THAT JUMBLATT WOULD NOT HAVE RECOURSE TO THIS LINE OF ARGUMENT IF THE DELAY WERE ARRANGED.

6. SOURCE STRESSED THAT FATE OF COUNTRY DEPENDED ON AGREEMENT AMONG GEMAYEL, JUMBLATT AND THE SYRIANS. (IT WOULD BE DIFFICULT TO FAULT THIS BELIEF TO ANY GREAT EXTENT.) GETTING GEMAYEL TOGETHER WITH JUMBLATT THEREFORE WAS ALSO AS IMPORTANT AS GETTING JUMBLATT TOGETHER WITH THE SYRIANS. HE ASKED FOR ASSISTANCE IN A JUMBLATT-GEMAYEL GET-TOGETHER IN ADDITION TO WHAT WE COULD DO VIS-A-VIS SYRIANS.

7. I WAS OF COURSE NON-COMMITTAL IN EACH CASE. SAID I WOULD REPORT OUR TALK. CAN OBVIOUSLY DO NOTHING ABOUT SYRIANS BUT WILL SEE TO IT DISCREETLY THAT GEMAYEL GETS THE MESSAGE.
WARING

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SECURITY, POLITICAL SITUATION, POLITICAL LEADERS, MEETINGS, LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS, ELECTION CANCELLATION, CAT-C
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 APR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ellisoob
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976BEIRUT03827
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: P850108-2370
From: BEIRUT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760410/aaaaahyj.tel
Line Count: 82
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NODS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: 76 BEIRUT 3822
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ellisoob
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 15 JUN 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <15 JUN 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <14 OCT 2004 by ellisoob>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LEBANESE PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, LE, SY, (JUMBLATT, KAMAL), (SARKIS, ELIAS), (GEMAYEL, PIERRE)
To: STATE SS SECRETARY KINSHASA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006